

Nightingale by Pondermoniums

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Summary:

Hopper's jaded as all hell when he hears the news:

Billy Hargrove's in custody.

Again.

1. Chapter 1

Author's Note:

This was inspired by @lovebillyhargrove 's tag game on tumblr! You can see the original post for part 1 here ~

Mature rating for now, but it might go up to explicit
~~~ who's to say?

Hopper's jaded as all hell when he hears the news:

Billy Hargrove's in custody.

Again.

The guy has one of the most impressive criminal records to date - mostly because he gets off with very little jail time, volunteer work, or fines every. Single. Time.

But....this time is different. The attitude rolls off him in waves, he just radiates personality which - annoyingly - makes him a favorite of the precinct's secretaries. Hopper knows him and he knows Hopper -

But he's quiet this time. That's the difference. He's a listener, sure, but he always has an answer. A come back. Now, however, as Hopper runs through the report and peppers inquiries to Mr. Hargrove....the guy doesn't say a damn word.

Until Hopper stares agape at the man's lawyer sitting adjacent at the interrogation table. He prompts, "Say that again."

She obliges smoothly, "My client will not answer any questions unless they are posed to him by a specified person."

Hopper laces his fingers and sets his chin on the hammock of them. "Dare I ask, who that may be?"

Now,

Steve Harrington's just a nurse. A kind nurse who spends his time in the pediatric ward, only venturing out to attend to teenagers who are far too damn young to be in a hospital cot. Hopper actually knows him, too, with how often he's frequented the various hospitals for various investigations. And he likes to check on certain victims. It helps him keep his head on straight; as opposed to dealing with predators all the time.

"Hi, Chief. Can I interest you in some," Steve kissed his fingertips, "atrocious coffee?"

He laughed, but it faded quickly. "No thanks, Mr. Harrington."

Steve frowned at him from the coffee vending machine. "Last name? Am I in trouble?"

"I don't know yet. Do you know one William 'Billy' Hargrove?"

He had his answer instantly. Steve's shoulders slumped and he gazed at the machine like he might get a little can of pity alongside his coffee. "He came in during one of my red-eye shifts. I was in the area, so I was his nurse. I'm kind of obligated. You know."

Hopper nodded. Hippocratic Oath, and all that. Or for nurses it was the Nightingale Pledge. "He's in custody."

His can of coffee had fallen to the pick-up box, but Steve didn't reach for it yet. He stared at the chief with a mixture of concern and affront. "So? What does that have to do with me?"

"He made an annoying request."

"Yeah, he did that while he was here. What does he want?"

"You."

## 2. Chapter 2

### Notes for the Chapter:

You can see the original post for part 2 here ~

The only reason Billy got a pair of cuffs on his wrists was because he went to the hospital. Hospitals were required to involve the police when suspicious wounds entered the building.

Now he lay patiently in his cell of the police station. Ironically, the safest place in town. Plus, Hopper did good work. Efficient. Billy knew he wouldn't have to wait too long -

"Hargrove. You're up."

He swiveled his hips so his feet touched the ground, and rocked himself up to standing. The cop placed the handcuffs on his wrists through the sanctioned gap in the bars, and then opened the door. Billy strolled as contently as a handcuffed man could through the sterile, boring hallways between the cells and the interrogation room.

He sat once again in the steel chair, and waited some more.

This was an annoying tactic, making the person wait for a conversation. He supposed it worked on common people and smaller criminals, but Billy simply retreated back into his meditative space, where a full album of music played on loop...

The door opened, and he lifted his gaze to see Steve holding his file and warily looking between Billy and the seat opposite him.

Billy smiled much as he had the first time he woke up to Steve removing his blood transfusion needle. "Hi."

Steve only sighed as he settled into his chair, and flicked annoyed eyes at him from behind his glasses. Billy liked his glasses. He also liked Steve without them.

"What's your prescription?"

Steve blinked vacantly up at him. “Huh?”

Billy lifted his cuffed hands onto the table, one of them pointing, “Your glasses.”

Steve stared at him, and then his irises distinctly cut to the side. Billy’s own flicked to his ears, where he could just see an earpiece hiding beneath his hair.

*“I probably don’t have to tell you this,”* Steve listened to Hopper’s patient drone, *“but the fewer questions he asks to you, the better. Don’t let him distract you.”*

He swallowed thickly and took out the pictures inside of the file. “Do you know these people?”

Billy cast his attention over the images and knocked two of them back toward the file. “Those two don’t matter. The red-head is a test. To see how honest I’ll be. It’s my stepsister.”

Steve began to tuck the images back into a neat pile, but his gaze lingered on the teenager while he listened to the voice in his ear. Then, “She’s missing.”

“No, she isn’t. She’s at a safe house. And no, they don’t get to know where that is.”

Steve didn’t give that much of a response as he began sifting through the papers -

“I don’t read quickly!” he shouted at the two-way mirror.

That caught Billy off-guard. But a moment later, he turned his head to laugh into his bicep. He could just picture Hopper harrumphing under his mustache.

“Is that legal?”

Billy perked up. “What? A safe house?” He shrugged. “A person on my property with my permission? Yeah.”

Steve slumped a little to the side. “With *their* permission?”

He shrugged again. “She gets out of school for a week. She’s thrilled.”

“Is there documentation of this place?”

Billy smiled. “Somewhere.”

A sigh heaved out of Steve as he bowed his head and started rummaging through his hair. Billy couldn’t blame him; a full week of shifts at the hospital and then Hopper probably interrogated him before allowing him to be in the room with Billy. Steve would certainly be at the end of his limits.

“Why? Why why why why,” he lifted his head for his brassy-gold glasses to be hanging low on his nose, “why am I here, Billy? You already know everything that’s in this folder.”

“I wanted to see you,” he said softly. Then he leaned forward and purred, “They handle me roughly here. I think my stitches might’ve torn.”

“Well you’re gonna be screwed in prison, and you’re way too pretty to survive that place - ”

“I wanted to see you. Sue me.”

“What are my chances?”

“Not great. My lawyers are excellent.”

Steve’s eyes squinted dramatically with thought as he pushed his glasses back up and leaned back in his chair. “Hmm...”

Billy wiggled a little as a grin flashed across his face. “You’re still my nurse until my stitches are out.”

Those large doe eyes widened. He gestured around the room. “Whatever *this* is, is outside of my pay grade and degree. Now how about you walk me through what happened.”

A lingering smile kept Billy’s features warm. Steve had said as much in the hospital, after the doctor stormed out of his private room and probably reported his ass to these people.

“On Wednesday, May 2nd, I got wind that someone was looking too closely at my stepsister. She already has some little nobody for a boyfriend so I knew this was something different. I told her to spend the weekend with him, and don’t go home. Either I pick her up, or she stays put.

“She listens as well as I do.

“Come Saturday, May 5th, at...” his clear, turquoise eyes sparked off the harsh fluorescent light as he calculated, “7pm, give or take, I’m intervening a simultaneous breaking and entering, assault and battery, and kidnapping/hostage situation. Boyfriend is knocked out on his stoop. House is empty of parents because - well, teenagers.”

Steve tipped his head to that, understanding how teens would manage to be alone in a house together.

“I get my arm shredded and my aorta is almost sliced open, but by all means, hold me in custody instead of going after the other side of this ordeal.”

Steve glanced nervously at the window when Billy raised his voice at it. “Also, the boyfriend is black. I haven’t heard a word about him.” He leaned back with a blatant, derisive scoff. “Pigs believing they’re better than wolves.”

“Saturday?”

Billy’s sharp gaze locked onto him even though his voice matched Steve’s quieter tone. “Saturday.”

“Which would mean you were in the hospital until Tuesday.”

He nodded once. “Discharged at 1pm - ”

Steve’s shoulders hitched when Hopper swept through the door behind him. The nurse looked almost like a teenager next to the bear of a man licking his finger to move through the file pages quickly.

Billy’s feet found Steve’s under the table, pushing them together to frame them in between his own. Steve peered at him, a question in his eyes but Billy waited for Hopper to find what he wanted.

Steve could only lean out of the man's way as he slammed a hand on the table, shut the file with more force than paper or card stock ever needed, and then marched out of the room. His bellow reverberated down the hallway. "GOD DAMNIT, HE HAS AN ALIBI!"

Billy kept his snicker to a minimum while Steve took his time processing that. "An alibi for what?"

He lifted his hands to scratch his nose. "Something I wasn't there for, clearly."

Steve gaped at him and hunched over the table. "But - wha- Your sister? Was that all bullshit?"

"Hopper makes me wait all the time."

His back hit the chair once again as he shoved his fingers into his hair. "Oh my god, you're so petty."

Billy chuckled as a pair of officers came in and ushered them out of the room. Billy was pushed into a chair in the large cubicle room to work through his check-out process. Steve wasn't far off, stuck at a similar desk doing basically the same thing.

Then all of the phones went off simultaneously. Some of the cops looked around at each other while picking up the receiver...

The room swiftly cleared by two-thirds, but Hopper returned to stand between Billy and Steve's desks. The latter waited with tired eyes while the former fidgeted with the chain hanging between his wrists.

"Steve...the nurse on your routes was just murdered."

That...didn't quite land yet, until Billy mumbled, "You're welcome."

Steve's head whipped around while Hopper scowled. "You're not going anywhere. Not without a goddamn tracking anklet."

Billy shook his head once, indifferent. "I have a fine taste for jewelry."

Hopper couldn't linger to deal with him, though. He ran out of the

room to get to the situation at the hospital.

Steve could only slump back in the itchy upholstery of his chair. Eventually, Billy chimed, “You look good in your hot pink scrubs.”

The nurse’s head slowly turned. “How did you know?”

He found Billy with all of his weight on the arm rest, pointed entirely at Steve until he turned his face away. He gradually reclined back in his chair. “It’s my job to know.”

Steve was so tired. He felt worry for his kids in the hospital, apologetic for the rest of the staff, and just so, so confused...

“I’m just a nurse.”

Whatever Billy took from that, he replied, “You took care of me and made me laugh. I’m easy to please.”

**Author's Note:**

[My harrington Tumblr~](#)

[My main Tumblr~](#)